

A  
History of  
Hungarian  
Music.

JULIUS KALDY.

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A

# HISTORY OF HUNGARIAN MUSIC



*Issued as a  
"Musical Standard" Extra.*

*For List of Musical Works  
please refer to the end  
of the volume.*

A  
HISTORY OF  
HUNGARIAN  
MUSIC

BY

JULIUS KALDY .

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HUNGARIAN  
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THE Hungarians must have had a special love for music in their original home, for in their sacrifices and other religious ceremonies, in their national festivals, before and after a battle, at banquets and funerals, Song, Music, and Dancing played an important rôle.

In religious sacrifices the High priest (Táltos) led the ceremony with Song. The people, repeating the last verse of the stanza, softly sang the refrain, and young girls, scattering fragrant herbs in the

altar flame, danced a blithe dance. At national festivals and at banquets the minstrels sang, accompanying themselves on their lute, the heroic deeds of fallen champions, or poured forth other patriotic songs, while reciters declaimed in sonorous rhythms the old heroic legends.

Our ancestors used to inter their dead with song and music. Priests of lower rank (Gyulas) delivered an address at the funeral, praised the heroism and virtues of the dead, and at the end paced round the grave in a slow dance. This custom likewise remained partially until the present day. For at burials—with Catholic and Protestant alike—the Cantor takes leave of the dead in a mournful song. After the interment the mourners assemble with the sorrowing family at the funeral banquet. 160 years ago the “Dance of Death” used to be danced after this evening meal.

This was probably the oldest Hungarian dance, which our people here danced

for hundreds of years as a remnant of heathen funeral rites. Among the compositions of the renowned Gipsy musician, Czinka Panna, there is a "Dance of Death" melody, of the first half of the 18th century.

That music and song were in great maturity already among the Huns is proved by the Travels of Priscus Rhetor whom the Emperor of Byzantium sent along with the Senator Maximus on an embassy to Attila.

Like the Gallic bards, the Vates, and the Skandinavian Skalds, the Hun minstrels not only stimulated the fighters to the combat but took part in the battle themselves. Many of them remained on the field of battle. In 451, on the eve of the bloody and desperate battle of Catalaunum, when Attila withdrew to his barricade of wagons, the dirges of the Huns echoed from there to the enemy's camp. Next day numberless lutes were found on the battle-field.

Later, at the time of the conquest of the land, in the 10th century, the music of the Hungarians must have been highly developed, for the "Anonymous" of King Béla (*Anonymus Bélæ Regis notarius*) ends his account of the fights of the leaders Lel, Bulcsu, and Botond, with the words: "As to their wars and heroic deeds, if you pay no credence to my letter, at least believe the prattling songs of the minstrels, and the well-worn legends of the people, who have not allowed the heroic deeds of the Hungarians up till now to fall into oblivion." After Arpád had conquered the land, he marched with his people into the castle of Attila, where everything was waste and neglected. "In the ruins"—says the Anonymous—"they held daily banquets, they sat in rows in the palace of Attila, and the sounds and sweet tones of their lutes and shalms, and all sorts of songs from their vocalists, echoed from the company." Along with the Anonymous notary other

chroniclers also mention the numerous hymns, dirges and martial songs, the latter of which were forthcoming in great numbers, and enjoyed universal favour.

The minstrels, reciters, and jongleurs can be regarded as the makers of these songs, who already at Arpad's time sang their heroic songs at national festivities, which came into popular use thereby. The name "igricz," of slavic origin, used to refer to Harlequinades, Mummeries, and buffooneries, and since it was not in the nature of the Hungarians to take part in common antics, in frivolous buffooneries, or to feel any particular pleasure therein, it is probable that these jongleurs were of foreign nationality. In their place came the Troubadours later, whose name is by many people derived from "trefa" (fun).

Many interesting facts about the dance of the Hungarians are found in the Chronicle of the Monk of St. Gallen, Ekkehard (10th century). He relates

that in the Hungarian dance there are seven steps. He names it "Siebensprünge" ("the Seven Steps"). This dance was taught to the people of the Lake of Constance by the Hungarians during the latter's residence there, who later under the name of "Hun step" applied this dance to their own slow moving dance.

Many aver that the leaders themselves made the old Hungarian heroic songs, the minstrels being only their exponents, after having put them to music.

All testimony points to the fact that at Arpád's time music was not only beloved by great personages, but also among the people. It is known of Bishop Gerhard, that, when he came from his seat Csanád with Walther, the singing-master of the Fehérvár School, to King Stephen I., he passed the night on the way at suitable places, and through the night was awakened from his sleep by songs. The bishop turned to his conductor with the words

"Walther, do you hear how sweet the song of the Hungarians is?" Since the songs grew clearer and clearer, Gerhard continued: "Walther, tell me, what causes this song which compels me to interrupt my slumbers?" On this, Walther declared that a girl was the singer, who ground wheat on a handmill and whiled away her hard work with singing. Thus the Hungarians had already at that time a taste for singing, and carried on their hard work while singing, just as at present, when the most beautiful Hungarian folk-songs arise at ploughing and sowing, at the harvest and the vintage.

The Hungarian music must have had great repute even 800 years ago, for when the Hungarians fought as allies of the Russian prince Isislav, against the Poles and Bohemians, and, after a victorious fight, marched with triumphal pomp into Kiev, the townspeople got up festivities in honour of their guests, and "the house

was fortunate in which Hungarian music sounded."

We know from descriptions that the following instruments were in use in Hungary: the Lute (*koboz*, a kind of Indian Lyre), and the Violin (*hegedü*) likewise a string-instrument. Of wind-instruments, large and small pipes were made out of willow twigs—which are still a popular instrument like the Shepherd's pipe (*tilinkó*);—the horn made out of the buffalo or ox's horn called "kürt"; the small hand-drum, like a Moorish tambourine, but without castanets. It is best to assume that the Hungarians brought these musical instruments from their original home. The field-trumpet and the cymbal were of later date.

With regard to form, opinions about the old lutes are various. Most probably it was like the Indian national instrument, the *Vina*. The player sat, laid it on his knee, and played *pizzicato*. Among the Székelys, in Transylvania, there is still a

similar instrument which is so played and is called the "timbora."

Unfortunately we know not a single melody from the music of the Huns' songs, nor from the time of the old heathenism, but from the manner of life and the continual wars of our people it is self-evident that the music of that time must have been dramatic and heroic. The best proof of its once high development are the old Hungarian legends and traditions, which relate in song the fortunate or unfortunate careers of the nation, the heroic deeds of Attila, Arpad, and the dukes. The melodies of these songs were gradually lost in the advance of Christianity, and it is probable that, with the crushing of Vata's rebellion, very many precious poetical and musical products of the ancient days of heathen Hungary were entirely destroyed.

Under Stephen I., and later, the Christian church-music spread also among us, and the Gregorian song soon took root

here, too, as among all the other proselytes to Christianity. The schools founded by Stephen I. and his successors had a two-fold task: to educate in Christian religion and in song.

In the first of these schools founded by Bishop Gregory at Székesfehérvár, the forementioned Walther instructed the children of thirty christianised families in Latin and in song.

Several bishops followed this example, and thus schools arose in Esztergom, Pannonhalma, Vácz, Veszprém, Nagyvárad and Nyitra.

The church-music had some influence on our popular songs is plain from certain Folk-songs whose melody is constructed on the Scale of Church-music, which at the same time is a convincing proof of their age. In these songs, though the words are more recent, the melodies plainly show the influence of Christian Church-music.

Since the first priests in Hungary were

strangers and principally Italians, as a matter of course they taught the young people only Latin songs. Later, when several natives became clergymen, they spread the Church-songs in Hungarian translations, composed church-songs themselves, Hymns with Hungarian text which, however, by a law of King Kál-mán's time (1112) could only be adopted among Church-songs on approval by the Synod.

Our annals mention several such composers of this time, among the rest Andreas Vásárhelyi, who wrote a song to the Virgin as Patroness of Hungary, and an unknown composer, whose song on St. Stephen was printed at Nüremburg in 1454.

From this time the Hungarian text of another church song has come down to us, the Königsberg fragment "On the virginity of the Virgin Mary." The tunes of the three songs mentioned we do not know, but they cannot have been aught else than the ordinary Gregorian Hymns.

We must now mention two pre-eminent Hungarians, who have acquired European renown by their art. The first was Nicolas Klinsor in the 13th Century, a Transylvanian who lived at the court of Andreas III., and as one of the most learned of the Master Singers took part in the competition held at the Wartburg near Eisenach in 1208 at the invitation of the German Minnesinger, Henry von Ofterdingen. Some of his songs are found in the old epic poem: *Der Sängerkrieg auf der Wartburg* (the singing match at the Wartburg). Still more famous was George Szlatkoni (Slakoni, Slakona), born in Krajna near Nyitra, 1456, who at the beginning of the 16th century was the 4th bishop of St. Stephen's church in Vienna, and as privy councillor and choir-master to Emperor Maximilian I. distinguished himself in religious and secular music alike.\*)

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\* Among the pictures of Hans Burgmayer (Imperial and Royal Library, Vienna) which contain

At the court of the Hungarian Kings of mixed families foreign masters often found employment. The Capellmeister of King Sigismund was the renowned Georg Stoltz, Josquin des Prés' contemporary. At the court of King Mathias, the great Netherland theorist, Johann Tinctoris, resided, who was the Capellmeister of King Ferdinand of Naples and the music-master of his daughter Beatrice. Beatrice brought him with her to Hungary, and

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135 woodcuts and exhibit the triumph of the Emperor Maximilian, our countryman is portrayed sitting in a cant equipage and directing his band of singers and musicians. Under the picture is the word "Apollo." The explanation appended to the pictures thus alludes to Szlakoni:

Szlakoni (Bishop in Vienna) is to be made Capellmeister, and the rhyme has reference to the fact, that, by direction of the Emperor, he arranged the singing of the choir in a most charming manner :

In consonance and harmony,  
In melody and symphony,  
In every art to my desire  
Have I improved the tuneful choir.  
And yet the honour not to me  
But to my Emperor must be.

under him the court-band and the singers of King Matthias attained world-wide renown. According to Peter, Bishop of Vulturan and legate of Sixtus IV., there was no better choir at that time than that of King Matthias.

This fact plainly shows that King Matthias fostered music, and that the Queen as well as he had a band and a choir. In addition there was a well-organized band of trumpets. The band of the King and Queen must have consisted of 30 executants, which was reckoned an extraordinary number for that time, if we compare the Vienna band of Leopold some centuries later, which was only 18 strong.

Tinctoris dedicated to Queen Beatrice one of his renowned theoretical works. At the same time lived Monetarius, born at Selmecz, who distinguished himself as a composer and by a theoretical work, which he dedicated to George Thurzó in 1513.

Even King Wladislaus II., renowned for his great poverty, spent 200 pieces of gold yearly on his singers and musicians.

Under Lewis II. Adrian Willaert, of Netherland birth (afterwards the founder of the Venetian School), lived seven years at Buda, and left Hungary after the battle of Mohács. Willaert, the creator of the Madrigal, dedicated to the wife of Lewis II. a madrigal consisting of several parts, which is preserved in St. Mark's Library at Venice.

The residence of these illustrious personages in our land, who were all disciples of the old counterpoint, has exercised small influence on the character of the Hungarian music, for singers and instruments alike were brought sometimes out of Italy, sometimes from Germany, and, while they figured as court musicians only in churches and at court festivities, Hungarian music drew little advantage from their sojourn here and only a few popular songs have descended to us, e.g., the song “Mátyást

mostan választotta" (King Matthias has been elected) which the children sang at Matthias' election to the throne.

In King Sigismund's time there were organs in many churches. There is a well known document of John Hunyadi (1452) in which the parish of Felsö-Bánya is allowed certain expenses for the erection of an organ. The first introduction of this instrument, however, cannot be historically indicated. According to Nicolas Oláh an organ with silver pipes was played at Visegrád in the chapel of King Matthias, whereas at Buda Masses with song were celebrated; thus not only was the royal Cathedral (Matthias' church) decorated with an organ, but there was also instrumental music corresponding to the time.

With regard to the Hungarian Folk-songs and Dance Music, no certain data have come down to us from these centuries: \* still we may assume that it went on

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\* The 10th to the 15th centuries.

a way of its own despite foreign influence. Conspicuous executants of Hungarian dance-music were the wandering gipsies of the 14th century, and they especially spread the Hungarian secular instrumental music. Not only the people patronized them, but they were willingly entertained at the courts of the magnates. They played a rôle not only in festivities, but sometimes also at the Parliament meetings, of which our historians make mention, at the noisy assemblies at Rákos and Hatvan in 1525. The most conspicuous was Dominik Kármán who, according to Tinódi, enjoyed great renown as a lutist and a violinist. A verse of Tinódi testifies that the lute at that time was played by the fingers, but the violin was already played by the gipsies with the bow.

In the 18th century Michael Barna and Czinka Panna, distinguished themselves—the former being called the Hungarian Orpheus—on whose life and death numer-

ous Latin poems were written. Johann Bihary followed them, one of the most illustrious, whose recruiting tunes and *Primate*, *Palatine*, and *Coronation* tunes are among the most beautiful of Hungarian dances. He and his band were invited more than once to the Court-balls at Vienna. He gave concerts in Hungary, Transylvania, Poland, and Vienna; the great Beethoven listened to his playing often with great pleasure, and has used the melody of a slow Hungarian tune of Bihary's in his overture dedicated to King Stephen. At present our gipsy bands win laurels not only in Europe but also in America and Asia, reaping both money and renown. They deserve our thanks for spreading Hungarian music.

Returning to earlier centuries, we must not forget war-songs and camp-music. History mentions as composers of this style John Cesinge, who, as Bishop of Pécs (15th century), placed himself at the

head of his troops, and inspired his soldiers to battle by his songs. Several Hungarian lutists had repute in Europe already in the 16th century. One was Valentine Bakfark, others say Graevisius (born in Transylvania 1507, died at Padua 1576), who lived chiefly in Poland. He came at the invitation of the emperor Maximilian to Vienna (1570) where he played a rôle at court. He lived long at the court of the Polish King August Sigismund, with whom he must have been on intimate terms, at least the preface of one of his works says as much. Two of his works have come down to us: *Premier livre de tabulature de lutte* (Paris, 1564), and *Bakfarci Valentini Greffi Pannonii Harmoniarum musicarum usum testudinis factorum* (Cracoviæ, 1566). He dedicated the last work to the Polish King, who bestowed on him a property as leader of the court band. John Bakfark—probably son of the foregoing—was also a lute virtuoso of great fame. Among the

works of both we find several compositions written in Hungarian style.

As excellent lutist must be named John Newsidler, who was born in Pozsony. His school for the Lute appeared in Nuremberg. In the first volume of this work he treats of Lute tablature. In the second volume are several Fantasias, Preludes, Psalms and Motetts.

A contemporary of his was Christopher Armpruster, also born in Transylvania, whose Pamphlet, "Song on morality," appeared in print in 1551.

In the 16th century are conspicuous Andreas Batizi (1546) with his "Fair history of the Holy Marriage of the Patriarch Isaac," Andreas Farkas (1538) with "How God led Israel's people from Egypt and similarly the Hungarians from Scythia," Peter Kákonyi, Peter Désy, Kasper Bajnai, Stephan Csükei, Michael Sztáray, Blasius Székely, and Michael Tarjay, who have also written songs with biblical purport, and whose style despite

their religious character, is quite Hungarian. In the airs there is much melodious invention. Many a song sounds just like an earnest slow Hungarian tune. We see, therefore, how, even in the 16th century, those who were of pure Hungarian race were concerned with music and aimed at elevating our national music not only in secular songs, but by applying it to religious ditties.

At this time Sebastian Tinódi lived, the lute-player of the 16th century, whom the people named "Sebök-deák." He was the prototype of the true lutist, wandering through the country, and playing his lute here and there. He wrote music to his songs. He was not only a true chronicler in his historical songs of the events of the 16th century, but he was the first Hungarian composer; for the musical invention of his songs and their construction are of quite a Hungarian character, and some of his songs, e.g. "Sok csudák" (Many a miracle),

"Siess keresztyén" (Hasten Christian) are quite unique and possess abiding worth. The tune of his song "Enyingi Török" Francis Erkel has adapted in his famous funeral march in his opera "Ladislaus Hunyadi."

Tinódi's songs passed from mouth to mouth at that time, and people began afterwards to perpetuate their style, as the numerous songs and ballads of the Thököly and Rákóczi period show.

The bloom of Hungarian music, however, began to take greater dimensions already with the spread of the Hungarian Reformation. Then the people sang in churches in their own language, and made their musical forms out of the tunes in the Psalter. At that time secular poems were often sung to the music of sacred songs, and in many tunes composed in the 17th century we recognise the tunes of the hymns of the Huguenots composed by Gaudimel which were naturalized with us.

The most brilliant period of our Folk-songs is in the time of Thököly and still more in that of Rákóczi. We can only wonder at the beauty, impressiveness, natural strength and characteristic rhythm of the so-called *Kurutz songs* and be amazed at their variety.

The Kurutz songs and other musical creations of that time are not only genuine musical pearls, but accurately reflect, also, the character and peculiarity of the Hungarian music and form the source from which the later songs, tunes, recruiting songs, wedding and other dances, and the whole body of the so-called "hallgató magyar" melodies have sprung. If we take into consideration that the great masters, Handel and Sebastian Bach, were born, or in their childhood, when these songs arose, and that Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven—this triad of geniuses—lived 50 or 60 years later, we can scarcely express our marvel at the astonishing variety and versatility of the bold forms and rich-

ness of the rhythm which had revealed itself in Hungarian music at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century. F. Liszt rightly remarks: "There is no other music from which European musicians can learn so much rhythmic originality as the Hungarian."

At this time arose "Rákóczi Ferencz dala" (Song of Francis Rákóczi), "Rákóczi siralma" (Rákóczi's complaint), and the "Rákóczi nota" (Rákóczi Tune), from which the world-renowned Rákóczi March sprang a hundred years later.

At this period were composed the numerous melancholy songs of the exiles: "Oszi harmat" (Autumnal dew), "Ne búslj" (Don't be grieved), "Adam Balogh's tune" and "Bercsényi's tune" which have enduring value, and also many folk-songs which arose later can be referred to this period, viz., "Repülj fecském" (Fly, my swallow), "Az ég alatt" (Under the heaven), "Vörös bársnyi süvegem" (My cap of red velvet),

"Zöld asztalon ég a gyertya" (The candle is burning on the green table); and many other famous songs date from the Rákóczi period.

From the middle of the 17th to the end of the 18th century, only the Song and the Tune (*nóta*) were known in Hungarian music. The Song was a simple Folk-song, a war-song or a hymn. By "Tune" was implied a piece of music of greater extent. There was already, as we said, Thököli, Rákóczi, Bercsényi Tunes, from which sprang later the so-called "hallgató magyar," melodies which were intended for public performance. Also the different styles of Hungarian Dance-music arose in this period.

We had two sorts of dances, Court dances and Peasant dances. The "Palace dance" and the "Slow Hungarian" were court dances, the "Dance tune" and the "Dumping tune" were Peasant dances. The old Palace Dance was known exclusively as a court dance in the 15th century.

Its music is quite different from the difficult tempoed music of its time, and from the later foreign dances: Saraband, Pavan and Minuet. Its melody was livelier and moved in quicker rhythms. The nobility and their ladies danced it; and since it only consisted of slow turns and was rather a walking dance, old ladies and gentlemen, nay, even ecclesiastics, took part in it. In the music of this dance young Knights often showed their cleverness in a Hungarian solo, but at such occasions they moved more rapidly. This dance was danced also abroad as the "Passo mezzo ongarese" or "Passo mezzo ongaro" and formed a separate part of the Italian "Ballo."

From the Palace and the Slow Hungarian Dance rose the "Verbunkos," which was danced at recruiting. No other nation beside the Hungarian possesses such a dance. Popular dances were also the *Lakodalmas* (Wedding-dance), *Incsölkedő* (the "Coquettish"),

*Kalákás*, which were in use at weddings; the *Sátoros* (Dance of the tents), *Fegyveres* (Dance of the arms), and *Dobogó* (Drumming-dance), which were danced in camps and after the battle.

During the forties of the 19th Century several Hungarian Society dances arose, e.g., the *Körmagyár* (Ronde-magyar), the *Füzér-táncz* (Wreaths-dance), and the *Csárdás* (Tavern-dance), which is still in vogue.

As an excellent dance-composer, John Latova must be mentioned, belonging to the last century, who has written more than 80 works of this class. Antonis Csermák and Markus Rózsavölgyi who has written many excellent dances, followed him.

At the end of the 17th century some of our artists attained celebrity and brought honour to Hungary abroad. One of these was J. Sigismund Cousser, born at Pozsony, who in 1697 at Hamburg helped Mattheson and Kaisér to create the first

German opera. He produced a large number of his operas there. His operas Erindo (1693), Porus (1694), Pyramus and Thisbe (1694), Scipio in Africa (1697), enjoyed great favour. In 1700 he was choirmaster at Dublin Cathedral, where he died about 1730.\*

In the sphere of church-music Johann Francisci, born at Beszterczebánya in 1691, attained great honour as an excellent organist. He travelled through Germany, knew Mattheson and J. S. Bach, and had such renown that one of his friends in Breslau, Joh. Glettinger (1725), was inspired to make the following panegyric :

Illustrious friend, Amphion's progeny ;  
My fancy finds art's true ideal in thee.

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\* The following works appeared in print :—  
“Apollon enjoué,” containing six overtures, “The joy of the Muses” (Nüremberg, 1700), “Ode on the death after renouned Arabella Hunt” (London), “Serenade on the Birthday of the English King, George I.,” Dublin (1724).

Tny songs are like an angel's songs above,  
And thus the world bestows on thee her love;  
This only wish have I at my command,  
That thou may'st be the Orpheus of thy land.

In 1733 he was invited to Pozsony, where he lived as church-choirmaster. He returned to his native land to a similar post in 1735.

In the second half of the preceding century the higher circles cultivated secular music, especially Italian and German, to a great degree. They kept excellent bands, and invited to their conductorship illustrious foreign conductors.

The Esterházy's were pre-eminent for their patronage of music. Duke Nicholas Esterházy, and afterwards his son Paul, had in Kis-Marton a theatre erected with great luxury, and a distinguished band, at the head of which was Joseph Haydn, afterwards Ignatz Pleyel, and lastly Johann Nep. Hummel. The Károlyis had permanent bands and theatres in Megyer, the Batthyany's in Rohoncz, and the

Erdödy's in Pozsony. The higher clergy were not behindhand in the culture of music and kept in their residences singers and musicians, placing distinguished foreign masters at their head, which was of great influence to the formation of the Church style and also of secular music. The illustrious contrapuntist and theorist Albrechtsberger, Beethoven's master, lived at Györ, Michael Haydn also and Karl Dittersdorf in Nagy-Várad. They all exercised great influence on the development of the musical life in the towns mentioned. That influence can still be seen in all the towns where there was a standing band, for at these places the taste for music and its encouragement has remained among the people till the present day. As examples let us quote Kassa, Eger, Nagy-Várad, Pécs, Pozsony, Temesvár, where an excellent soil is prepared not only for concerts, but for theatrical exhibitions. After many of these bandmasters, musicians and

singers had founded families and remained in our land, the cultivation of music came more into fashion. Piano-playing began to spread at the beginning of this century. There was scarcely a nobleman's house, where this instrument was not found. For this reason several illustrious foreign masters settled in Hungary and occupied themselves with piano-forte teaching. These masters were disciples of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and thus the piano compositions of these three geniuses were introduced into aristocratic circles, where there must have been excellent players, since Beethoven has dedicated several of his classical piano sonatas to Hungarian ladies of high rank. The taste for music soon spread in middle-class society, and from this class proceeded our best musicians and composers. We must thank this movement for the fact that several Hungarian instruction-books appeared at the beginning of the century. The first School for

Piano was written by Stephen Gati (Buda 1809), which was followed by Dömény's and Milovitzkys Piano School, and a course of Harmony entitled the " Hungarian Apollo " by Andreas Bartay.

All these publications had a favourable effect on the development of music in general and that of Hungarian music in particular.

The number of those who cultivated Hungarian music was already considerable.

From their ranks Johann Fuss arose (born Tolna, 1777, died Vienna, 1819) who was so conspicuous as a composer of all styles of music that he awoke the interest of Haydn. He generally lived at Vienna, but in 1800 he was invited to Pozsony as composer, where he received universal esteem. He wrote string quartettes, trios, duos for violin and piano, sonatas for piano, solos and duets, overtures, sacred works and numerous duologues. The greater part of his works are printed.

Two countrymen of ours attained world-wide renown at the beginning of this century—Johann Nep. Hummel (born on Nov. 14th, 1778, at Pozsony), and Franz Liszt (born 22nd October, 1811, at the village of Doborján, in the County of Sopron). Hummel as a pianist belonged to the last cultivation of the classical style, and excelled by his free improvisation. The number of his compositions exceeds 120, of which his concertos for the piano and his renowned Septet for Wind instruments are of abiding worth. He died at Weimar on the 7th of October, 1837. His birth place, Pozsony, erected a statue to his memory in 1888.

Franz Liszt, awoke such wonder by his piano-playing in his 9th year, that he was called the second Mozart. The families of Szapáry, Apponyi, Esterházy, and Erdödy guaranteed a yearly amount for the child's education. His father took him to Vienna, where Charles Czerny and Salieri were his masters. At this

time he was introduced to Beethoven who prophesied a brilliant future for the boy, and kissed him publicly at his first concert at Vienna. At the age of 16—17 he ravished the world with his concerts. At the end of 1848 he abandoned the rôle of virtuoso, devoted himself to composition and settled in Weimar. There he began to write his incomparable Hungarian Rhapsodies, 15 in all, in which he employed the prettiest Folk-songs, and Dances, and the Rákóczi March. By his means Hungarian music was spread and made popular in Europe. He was the creator of the Rhapsody and of the Symphonic Poem. In the last named composition he employed many Hungarian tunes *e.g.* in "Battle of the Huns" and "Hungaria," and proved hereby that Hungarian music is capable of being applied to serious purposes.

We should have to write books in order to do justice to his many-sidedness as a composer and to his compositions.

Also as a tone-poet he occupies a high place. He was the apostle of Richard Wagner, who later became his son-in-law, and he paved the way for that great musical reformer.

In 1862, he went to Rome, where he lived in the seclusion of the Convent Monte Maria and there under the title of an Abbé received the lowest clerical ordination. At this time he wrote his most important works, his oratorio, "St. Elizabeth," first performed in Budapest in 1865, his renowned Hungarian Coronation March in 1867 and his oratorio, "Christus," which was first performed in Budapest in 1875. In both of the former he employed many Hungarian melodies.

He was President of the Royal Hungarian Academy of Music in 1875, where he taught the piano to the highest class. He died at Bayreuth on the 31st of July, 1886.

We Hungarians may be proud of the fact that the great gladiators of piano-

playing, Hummel and Liszt, were our countrymen.

A worthy contemporary of Liszt's was Francis Erkel (born 5th November, 1810, at Békés-Gyula. Died at Budapest 15th June, 1860). He can be confidently named as the creator of the Hungarian original opera, for all that was produced in this sphere before him by Joseph Rusicska with his "Flight of Béla," Joseph Heinisch with his "Election of King Matthias," and Andreas Bartay with his opera entitled "Cunning," can scarcely be regarded as aught else than as a more or less successful attempt at soaring, although genuine Hungarian music played a considerable part in these works. Francis Erkel's merits on this field are immortal. He showed the path to be followed and the means to be adopted that Hungarian opera might be a worthy companion of foreign musical drama. In 1848 he wrote "Maria Báthori," this was followed by "Ladislaus Hunyadi," which

was received with enthusiasm. Individual parts of this opera, the remarkable overture, the swan song, the church scene, the funeral March, can be said to be of classical value in the literature of Hungarian music. In 1860 his "Bánk Bán" was performed. In this work he attained very original and striking effects by the use of the Hungarian cymbal, along with old instruments seldom employed. In the scene on the banks of the Tisza he made the shepherd's pipe sound (of course represented by 2 piccolos) and gives to individual scenes a thoroughly Hungarian character. His opera "Sarolta" was performed in 1862. "George Dóza" followed in 1874, "Nameless Heroes" in 1880, "George Brankovics" in 1874 and "King Stephen" in 1885. The last work he wrote in his 76th year, despite which the melodic invention and instrumentation are as fresh as in his [early?] works.

He also takes first place as bandmaster.

In his artistic life of more than half a century he laid the foundations of the Philharmonic Concerts in Budapest, in 1850, and conducted them for eighteen years.

We cannot speak with detail of his services as bandmaster but can only mention the fact that it is through him that the orchestra of the National Theatre has gained European renown. His name will always live as the composer of the national hymn "Isten álld meg a magyart" (God save the Magyar) so long as there is a Hungarian in the land.

As a dramatic composer Charles Goldmark stands in the first rank, who, in the sphere of symphonies, chamber music, and song composition, enjoys a wide reputation not only in his own country but in all the cultivated world. Goldmark was born at Keszthely in 1832. He awoke real enthusiasm in 1860 when he came before the public with his Suite composed for violin and piano and his

Overture "Sakuntala" of eastern character. Goldmark belongs to those pre-eminent men of talent who distinguish themselves by originality, feeling, a vein of poetry, noble inspiration and interesting harmony. He is also a master of brilliant orchestration. Of his works the most remarkable are the Symphony "The Country Wedding," the overtures "Penthesilea," "Spring," and "Sappho." These works are found in the repertoires of Philharmonic Concerts all the world over. He gained the greatest success with his opera, "The Queen of Sheba" (1873). In this work his musical talents are at their best. In 1886, thirteen years later, his opera "Merlin" was performed. In this he abandoned his eastern style, and, curbing his individuality, has produced a work of grand style and of noble melody, which is almost equal to the "Queen of Sheba." Of late he has tried his powers in the lyric sphere, and with his new opera "A házi tücsök" (Cricket

on the hearth) he has repeatedly shown his many-sided brilliant talents. His music has much of Hungarian character in melody and conception alike.

Goldmark works slowly and re-writes much, but what he does write, be it a piece for the piano, a song, an orchestral piece, or an opera, all stands on a high level.

In the sphere of opera there are at present Karl Thern, the composer of Vörösmarty's "Song of Fót," whose operas "Gizul" and "The Siege of Tihany," gained great success in 1840; further, Charles Huber with his comic opera, "The Székely Maid," into which he has worked several of our prettiest songs. Charles Huber has done much as a violin teacher; he wrote an excellent violin school into the practical part of which he has incorporated many Hungarian songs. From his compositions we must single out "5 Hungarian Fantasias for Violin and Piano," and many patriotic male choruses,

"Freedom's song," "Memory of our Ancestors," "National flags," "For holy fatherland," "Song of inspiration," etc.

His son Eugene Hubay is one of the most renowned violinists, who enjoys great fame not only in Hungary but abroad. Thus far he has written three operas. "Alienor," and "The Lutanist of Cremona," were first performed in the Royal Hungarian Opera House. With the latter he gained success abroad. Of late he has struck out a new style with his opera "Falu rossza" (The bad fellow of the village)—the so-called popular operetta, which from beginning to end contains the prettiest Hungarian music, while the new arts of modern technique are applied simultaneously.

A very cultivated, fertile, and many-sided man is Edmund Mihalovich. As a composer he is a disciple of the new school. The style of the Symphonic Poem, created by Liszt, he cultivates with success. His works, "Hero and Leander," "La

Ronde du Sabbat," "The ghostly vessel," and "Sellö" (Nymph) are all eminent. His tunes are noble, his orchestration masterly. Thus far he has written two operas; "Hagbarth und Signe" and "Toldi's Love." In Hungarian music he is very successful, as is proved by his compositions for orchestra, "Dirge in memory of Francis Deák," and "Toldi's Love." Richard Wagner highly esteemed his musical talents, and wrote "Wieland the Smith" for him. Francis Sárossy has also written the successful operas "Atala" and "The last Abenceraige."

It is a matter for congratulation that we have talented composers among the younger generation. One of these is Emerich Elbert, who has shown dramatic power in the opera "Tamora"; further Edmund Farkas whose two operas, "The Penitents" and "Valentin Balassa," are written with beautiful melodic invention; Julius Mannheimer whose opera "Mari-

tana," and Maurice Varinecz whose "Rosamunda" and "Ratclif" have been performed abroad.

As cultivators of Hungarian music we must mention Michael Mosonyi (born in 1814 in Boldogasszonyfalva, county Moson), and Cornelius Abrányi, sen., who have rendered great services in the development of Hungarian music. Mosonyi in the fifties played a leading rôle in Pesth, and was an authority on church and chamber music. He wrote string quartets, Symphonies and religious compositions. In 1850 he applied himself with all his heart to the cultivation of Hungarian music. He gained great success with his *pièces de circonstance*: The memory of Kazinczy, Széchényi-Mourning, Festive Ouverture, Victory and Grief of the Hungarian Honvéd. The Hungarian ballad, the song, the male and mixed choruses, the Cantata and the opera are beholden to him for excellent works. Among his best works

are "The Festival of the old Hungarians at the river Ung" and "Fair Ilona," a romantic Hungarian opera.

As teacher and distinguished musical savant he had excellent scholars, *e.g.*, Alexander Erkel, Julius Erkel, Edmund Mihalovich, Ladislaus Zimay, etc. He died in 1870. Franz Liszt composed a funeral March in his memory.

Cornelius Abrányi played not only an important rôle in the spread of Hungarian music, but as composer he also takes a high place. His songs and ballads for solo voice, his fantasias for piano, are excellent specimens of Hungarian music. He has distinguished himself also as a writer on music. He founded the first Hungarian musical journal. He wrote instruction books, such as *A School of Composition*, *A General History of Music* and *The Peculiarities of Hungarian Music*. He founded at Arad the National Choral Society. The number of his compositions reaches nearly 100.

Edward Bartay has done much for the spread of Hungarian Music. From 1860 he has taken an active part in our musical movements. At present he is director of the National Conservatorium. He has written piano pieces, choruses, and instrumental works, which have been often performed with success. In the cultivation of orchestral and chamber music Julius Beliczay, I. Julius Major, Francis Xav. Szabó, Paul Jámbor, Arpád Kés-márky and Isidor Bátor are eminent for many excellent works.

Virtuoso playing which Liszt brought to great perfection has had great exponents also in our country, among them Emerik Székely (born in 1823 at Mátyus-falva, county Ugocsa) must be mentioned. Among his compositions are string quartets, trios and sonatas, but his fame is founded on his 32 Hungarian Fantasias, written for piano, and his 12 music idylls in which he has elaborated the greatest treasures of our modern Folk-songs.

Stephen Heller, the illustrious pianist, born at Budapest in 1815, achieved great success in 1830. The number of his works for the piano is 140. They are characterised by originality, good taste, elegant treatment and richness of melody. Since 1838 he lived at Paris, where he took first rank among distinguished pianoforte teachers, and where he died.\*

A Hungarian pianist of European renown is Count Géza Zichy, who, in his 14th year, by an unlucky wound from a gun lost his right arm. By unwearyed diligence he succeeded in training his left hand so that not only in Hungary but in the whole cultivated world he had excited the greatest admiration by his pianoforte playing. As a composer he has written several songs, many excellent works for choruses and the opera "Alar." He

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\* Stephen Heller, although born at Budapest, was not, however, an Hungarian. His parents were German Jews who had settled in Pesth. ED. MUSICAL STANDARD.

writes almost all the text to his own compositions.

In the composition of Hungarian songs, ballads, and male choruses the principal writers are: Benjamin Egressy the author of the melody of the "Szózat," with his noble popular songs; Ladislaus Zimay, Victor Langer, Ernest Lányi, with their romances; Alexander Erkel, the distinguished bandmaster, with his patriotic male choruses; Francis Gaál and Alois Tarnay. With our musical literature there is closely connected a species of Hungarian drama, the Popular Play, which takes its subjects from common life and which has the Folk-song and the dance as one of its principal elements. Edward Szigligety was the creator of this style of art. To his first two pieces, "Szökött Katona" (The Deserter), and "Csikós" (The Coltherd), Josef Szerdahelyi wrote the music, using for that purpose our oldest and most original songs. Also the music to "Matyás Diák" (The

student Matthias), "Bányarém" (The terror of the mine), "Liliomfi" is written by him. Later writers of the same order are Benjamin Egressy, Ignaz Bognár, Julius Káldy, Julius Erkel, Alexander Nikolits. Executants in this branch are Mimi de Cau, Michel Füredy, Josef Tamásy, Madame Hegedüs, and Madame Blaha. This style of drama greatly contributed to the fact that popular Hungarian music became known and appreciated abroad, for our publishers, directly after the performance of a piece, published the prettiest songs in it and circulated them not only in Hungary but also in Europe, so as to admit of foreign composers familiarising themselves with Hungarian music.

We should have to write a regular anthology if we reckoned up all the compositions which famous foreign composers have written in the Hungarian style, or in which they have used Hungarian songs. In the works of Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, and Weber we find many Hungarian

passages. We can mention only a few of the later composers, and thus we may credit Berlioz with the transcription of the renowned Rákóczi march ; Volkmann with "Visegrád," Twelve sketches for piano called "Hungarian sketches," "Souvenir of Maroth;" "At the tomb Count Széchényi;" John Brahms with four volumes of Hungarian dances, Hungarian and Gipsy songs; Raft with Hungarian dances ; Hofmann with a Hungarian suite ; Bülow a "Heroic March ;" Massenet, Hungarian March ; Delibes, parts of his ballet "Copélia ;" Mascagni, "Friend Fritz." Besides these the famous pianoforte and violin artists Dreischock, Thalberg, Wilmers, Schulhof, Rubinstein, Molique, Sarasate have written for their instruments Variations and Fantasias in Hungarian style with the introduction of favourite songs. When in 1860 operettas came into fashion some composers tried their powers in this branch. Among the earlier ones were

Géza Allaga and Charles Huber; afterwards Julius Káldy, Alexius Erkel, Béla Hegyi, Eugene Stojanovitcs.

More recently some have gained success in ballet music, and excellent music has been written by Charles Szabados, who with his ballet, "Viora," roused great enthusiasm. Eugene Stojanovites with his ballet "Csárdás," Stephen Kerner with "Le cheval de bronze," Lewis Tóth and Albert Metz with their ballet "Day and Night," have shown excellent powers of composition.

Many conspicuous countrymen of ours have won honour for Hungary abroad, *e.g.*, Josef Joachim, the greatest violinist of modern times, the Director of the High School in Berlin. Also among his compositions the most valuable is the Hungarian Concerto. Edward Reményi, Leopold Auer, Director of the Conservatorium at St. Petersburg, Edmund Singer, Rafael Josephi. Renowned conductors are Hans Richter, Sucher (Berlin), Seidel

(New York); singers: Mme. Mainville, Mme. Schoedel, Louise Liebhardt, Cornelia Hollósy, Rosa Csillag, Ida Benza, Francis Steger, Josef Wurda, John Beck, Lewis Bignio, etc.

As pianists and teachers we must further mention Antonio Sipos, with his numerous compositions for the piano, John Theindl and Willy Deutsch, who took an active part in the musical life of the capital. Teachers of composition were Michael Mosonyi and Alexander Nikolits; one might almost say that nearly all the younger generation have had their education from them. As writers on music beside the above mentioned Abrányi, are Gabriel Mátray and Stephen Bartalus. The first made the old Hungarian music known by his work "The melodies of historical, biblical and satirical Hungarian songs of the 17th century." Bartalus issued his interesting publication, "The Hungarian Orpheus," a collection of miscellaneous matter of the 18th and 19th

centuries and a general collection of Hungarian songs.

Recently Julius Káldy with his works, "The Treasures of old Hungarian Music," "Old Hungarian War Songs," "Recruiting Songs," "Songs and Marches of the War for Freedom," has aroused much enthusiasm.

We must mention that in Hungary since the beginning of this century many institutions and schools for the cultivation of music have arisen. In Kolozsvár in 1819, the first Hungarian Conservatorium now existing was founded (the first Hungarian Opera was performed there in 1821). In 1833 Arad followed this example. An artistic association founded a similar institution at Pesth called The Musicians Society, which in its turn founded the National Conservatoire. In 1860, Debreczen founded in its turn a Conservatoire, while Kassa, Szeged and Sabadka, followed its example.

In 1860 the National Dramatic School

was opened in Budapest, in which operatic song was also taught. At the same time the Society of Musical Amateurs was founded, and the Musical Academy of Buda. Later in both these institutes a Music School was organized. In 1875 the National Hungarian Academy of Music was opened with Franz Liszt and Francis Erkel at the head of it. Ultimately the Hungarian School of Music was opened under the presidency of Julius Káldy, Alexander Nikolits and Julius Major, who have undertaken the special field of cultivation and instruction in Hungarian music.

Beside these there are in Budapest, as in the larger provincial towns, many musical and choral societies, and at Budapest as brilliant a concert season as at Vienna or Leipzig. In the first rank we must name the concerts of the Philharmonic Society, the Budapest Society of amateurs, the Buda Musical Academy, also the performances of the National

Academy of Music, the National and the Hungarian School of Music, and also the concerts of the several musical societies. We must add the appearance of many famous foreign violinists, pianists and singers who visit Budapest regularly.

Lately historical concerts have been started, by Stephen Bartalus and Julius Káldy reviving the most precious relics of the 17th and 18th centuries. These concerts, in consequence of their historical and scientific character, are generally given in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

We have cause for pride that Hungarian music has in a comparatively short time reached so high a level. If we compare it with the music of other nations the Italian, French, and German, the result is really surprising. At the Festivities of the thousandth year of the nation we can point to world-renowned composers among our countrymen and eminent works in all branches of music,

and having regard to the past development and advance of Hungarian music we can look with full confidence and with great hope to the future.





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“A Slae Stryngē in a Virginall soundithe not aright,  
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